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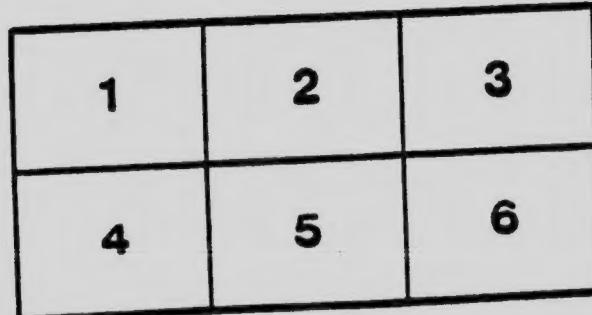
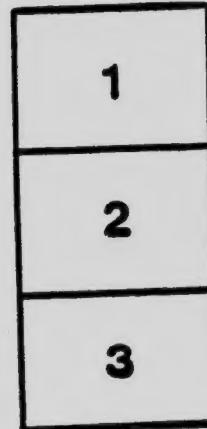
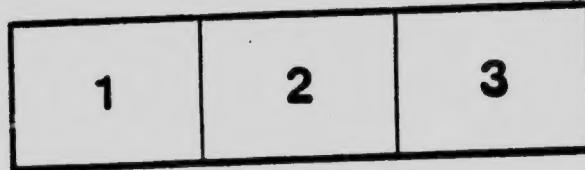
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LONGFELLOW

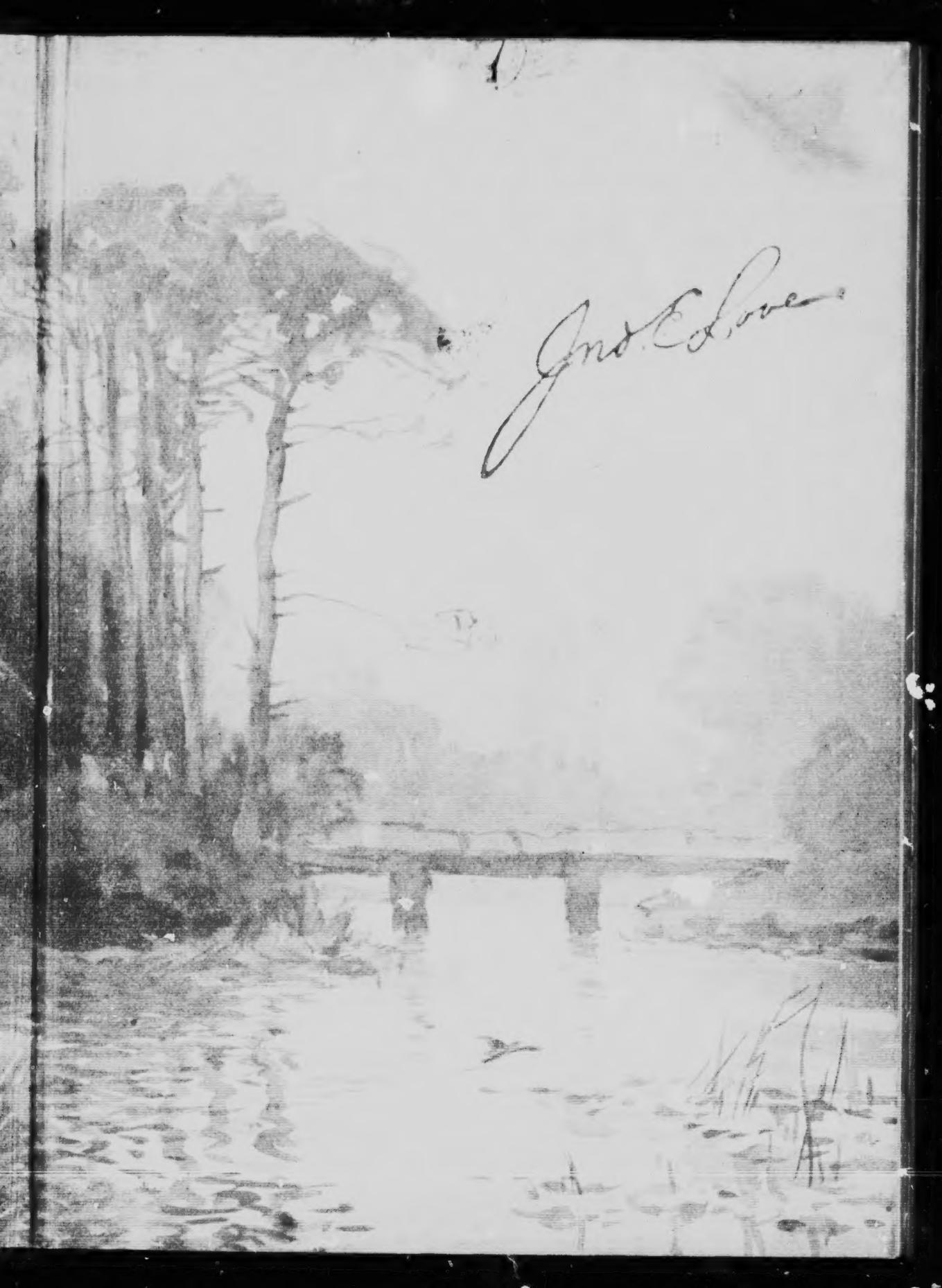


2275
DAYS WITH THE POETS



EWH!

Jno. Ed. Love





A Day
with
Longfellow.

Painting by E. W. Haslehurst.

LONGFELLOW'S HOUSE.

"A large old-fashioned house . . . a place of grassy terraces, long verandahs, lilac bushes and shady trees."





A DAY
WITH THE
POET
LONGFELLOW



LONDON .
HODDER & STOUGHTON
. TORONTO .
HENRY FROWDE



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In the same Series.

Burns.

Tennyson.

Keats.

Browning.

Wordsworth.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW.



HE expression of serious and tender thoughtfulness, which always characterized the quiet face of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, had deepened during his later years, into something akin to melancholy. The tragic loss of his beloved wife,—burned to death while she was sealing up in paper little locks of her children's hair,—had left its permanent and irrevocable mark upon his life. Still, he did not seclude himself with his sorrow: the professor of Modern Languages at Harvard could hardly do that. He remained the selfsame kindly, gentle, industrious man, welcoming with ready courtesy the innumerable visitors to the Craigie House.

This is a large old-fashioned house in Cambridge, Massachusetts—a place of grassy terraces, long verandahs, lilac bushes, and shady trees—a perfect dwelling for a man of cultured tastes, as the interior also testifies.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

From the Poet's study, a spacious, sunny room upon the ground floor, he could look across the meadows behind the house to the distant silver windings of the river Charles. It was a most orderly room. Every book and paper lay where he could put his hand on it in a moment. Book-cases full of valuable volumes—precious first editions—busts and portraits,—were to be seen on every side. A certain austere simplicity was noticeable all over Longfellow's house. "His private rooms," it has been said, "were like those of a German professor." But the attractiveness and delightfulness of Craigie House arose not from any intrinsic opulence of its contents, but from the personality of the man who lived there. "By his mere presence he rendered the sunshine brighter, and the place more radiant of kindness and peace."

The Poet began his day, so long as age and health permitted, by a brisk morning walk. He would be out and about by six, observing and enjoying the beauty of earth and air, and subsequently recording his exquisite impressions :

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

O Gift of God! O perfect day :
Whereon shall no man work, but play;
Whereon it is enough for me,
Not to be doing, but to be!

Through every fibre of my brain,
Through every nerve, through every vein,
I feel the electric thrill, the touch
Of life, that seems almost too much.

I hear the wind among the trees
Playing celestial symphonies ;
I see the branches downward bent,
Like keys of some great instrument.

And over me unrolls on high
The splendid scenery of the sky,
Where through a sapphire sea the sun
Sails like a golden galleon,

Towards yonder cloud-land in the W^{es}
Towards yonder Islands of the Blest,
Whose steep sierra far uplifts
Its craggy summits white with drifts.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

Blow, winds! and waft through all the rooms
The snowflakes of the cherry-blooms !
Blow, winds! and bend within my reach
The fiery blossoms of the peach !

O Life and Love ! O happy throng
Of thoughts, whose only speech is song !
O heart of man ! canst thou not be
Blithe as the air is, and as free ?

A Day of Sunshine.

The morning's post brought the first consignment of that enormous number of epistles which were at once an affliction and an amusement to him. The Poet was besieged by letters from ambitious aspirants seeking advice, and from self-styled failures, desirous of help. To these last he was peculiarly drawn, for he was distinguished by "a grace almost peculiar to himself at the time in which he lived—his tenderness towards the undeveloped artist, struggling towards individual expression." In short, his first desire was to help on people, and bring out the best in them.

Of apparent failure or success he recked little, believing, like Stevenson, that the true

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

success is labour,—that pursuit, and not attainment is the worthiest object of existence; and his philosophy is summed up in the well-known words of *The Ladder of Saint Augustine*,

Saint Augustine! well hast thou said,
That of our vices we can frame
A ladder, if we will but tread
Beneath our feet each deed of shame !

All common things, each day's events,
That with the hour begin and end,
Our pleasures and our discontents,
Are rounds by which we may ascend.

• • • • •

The longing for ignoble things;
The strife for triumph more than truth;
The hardening of the heart, that bring
Irreverence for the dreams of youth;

All thoughts of ill ; all evil deeds,
That have their root in thoughts of ill;
Whatever hinders or impedes
The action of the nobler will;—

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

All these must first be trampled down
Beneath our feet, if we would gain
In the bright fields of fair renown
The right of eminent domain.

We have not wings, we cannot soar;
But we have feet to scale and climb
By slow degrees, by more and more,
The cloudy summits of our time.

The mighty pyramids of stone
That wedge-like cleave the desert airs,
When nearer seen and better known,
Are but gigantic flights of stairs.

The distant mountains that uprear
Their solid bastions to the skies,
Are crossed by pathways, that appear
As we to higher levels rise.

The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

Standing on what too long we bore
With shoulders bent and downcast eyes,
We may discern—unseen before—
A path to higher destinies.

Nor deem the irrevocable Past
As wholly wasted, wholly vain,
If rising on its wrecks, at last
To something nobler we attain.

Constant requests for autographs formed the bulk of the day's budget, and these also never went unanswered—even when couched in terms the most *mal-a-propos*, much as those of the man who said that "he loved poetry in 'most any style,'"—"and would you please copy your 'Break, break, break' for the writer?" Possibly the worst offenders, in this matter of autograph-hunting, were those multitudinous schoolgirls whom Longfellow humorously complained that he was always "kept busy answering." They ignored the fact of his professional duties, and his own unremitting work; anything to get a reply in the handwriting of the celebrity! But he had a special delight in budding womanhood, and had de-

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

picted it with magical insight and rare delicacy of touch, in lines which have never been excelled in their charm and purity.

Maiden! with the meek, brown eyes
In whose orbs a shadow lies,
Like the dusk in evening skies !

Thou whose locks outshine the sun,
Golden tresses, wreathed in one,
As the braided streamlets run !

Standing, with reluctant feet,
Where the brook and river meet,
Womanhood and childhood fleet !

Seest thou shadows sailing by,
As the dove, with startled eye,
Sees the falcon's shadow fly ?

Hearest thou voices on the shore,
That our ears perceive no more,
Deafened by the cataract's roar ?

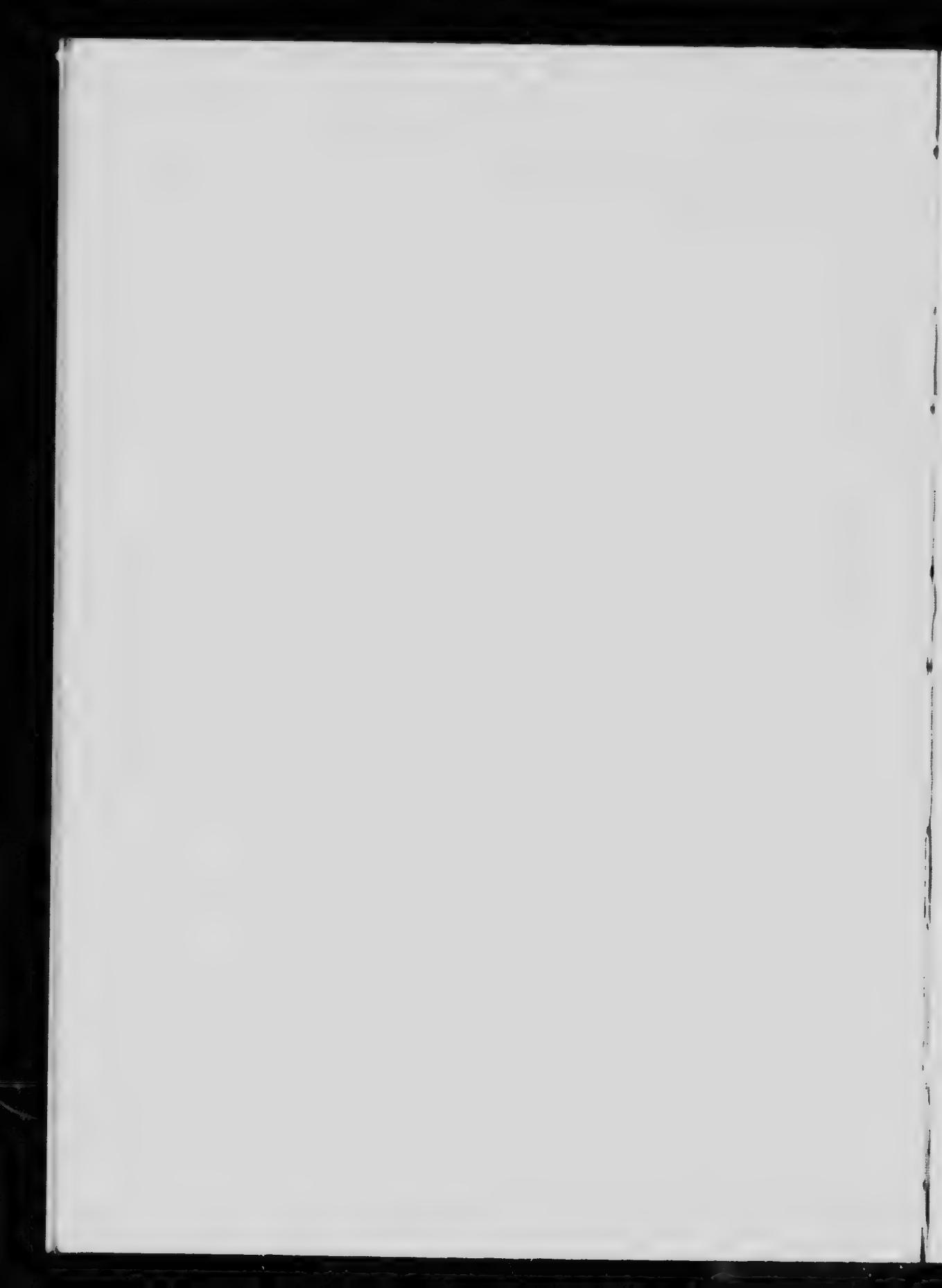
O, thou child of many prayers !
Life hath quicksands,—Life hath snares !
Care and age come unawares !

Painting by W. H. Margetson.

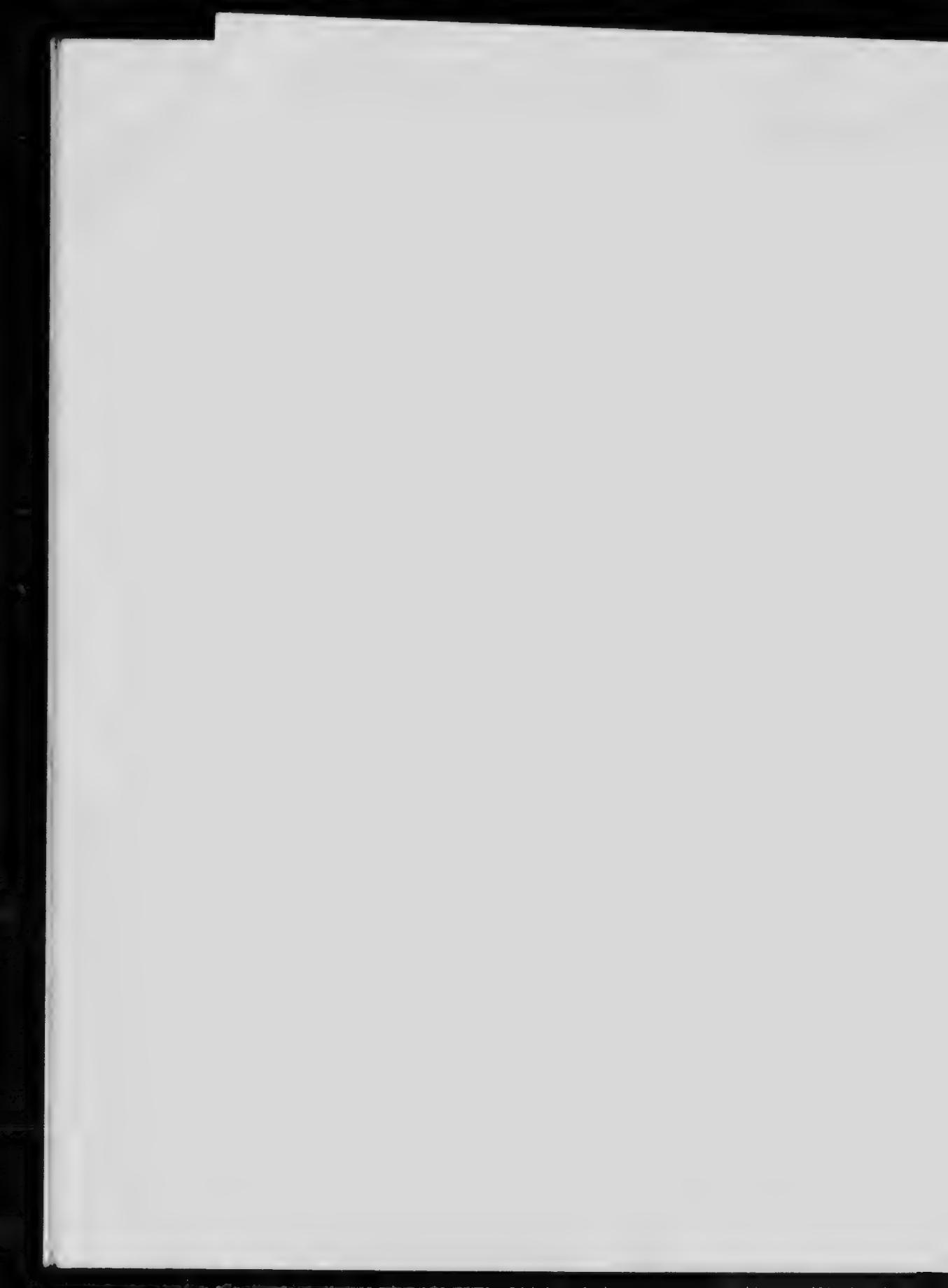
MAIDENHOOD.

Maiden with the meek brown eyes,
In whose orbs a shadow lies,
Like the dusk in evening skies !

Thou whose locks outshine the sun,
Golden tresses, wreathed in one,
As the braided streamlets run !







A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

Like the swell of some sweet tune,
Morning rises into noon,
May glides onward into June.

Childhood is the bough, where slumbered
Birds and blossoms many-numbered;—
Age, that bough with snows encumbered.

Gather, then, each flower that grows,
When the young heart overflows,
To embalm that tent of snows.

Bear a lily in thy hand ;
Gates of brass cannot withstand
One touch of that magic wand.

Bear through sorrow, wrong, and ruth,
In thy heart the dew of youth,
On thy lips the seal of truth.

O, that dew, like balm shall steal
Into wounds, that cannot heal,
Even as sleep our eyes doth seal ;

And that smile, like sunshine, dart
Into many a sunless heart,
For a smile of God thou art.

Maidenhood.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

The early instalment of letters attended to, the Poet could devote himself to his own affairs. He believed in *working* at poetry, methodically, systematically : although inspiration might flow with sudden fervour, it was not to be waited for. "Regular, proportioned, resolute, incessant industry," was the secret of his success, and the erasures and substitutions in his MSS. bear witness to his care in craftsmanship. The least conspicuous word must be as perfect as he could make it. Longfellow's creed, as expounded in *The Builders*, allowed for no scamped work.

All are architects of Fate,
Working in these walls of Time :
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.

Nothing useless is, or low ;
Each thing in its place is best ;
And what seems but idle show
Strengthens and supports the rest.

For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled ;
Our to-days and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

Truly shape and fashion these;
Leave no yawning gaps between;
Think not, because no man sees,
Such things will remain unseen.

In the elder days of Art,
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part;
For the Gods see everywhere.

Let us do our work as well,
Both the unseen and the seen ;
Make the house, where Gods may dwell,
Beautiful, entire, and clean.

Else our lives are incomplete,
Standing in these walls of Time,
Broken stairways, where the feet
Stumble as they seek to climb.

Build to-day, then, strong and sure,
With a firm and ample base ;
And ascending and secure
Shall to-morrow find its place.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

Thus alone can we attain
To those turrets, where the eye
Sees the world as one vast plain,
And one boundless reach of sky.

The Builders.

Work, indeed, whether mental or physical, was his first instinct, and he has preached the gospel of honest work to the whole English-speaking world in some of the most familiar lines in the language.

Under a spreading chestnut tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
 You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
 With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
 When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
 Look in at the open door :
They love to see the flaming forge,
 And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
 Like chaff from a threshing floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
 And sits among his boys;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
 He hears his daughter's voice,
Singing in the village choir,
 And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
 Singing in Paradise !
He needs must think of her once more,
 How in the grave she lies ;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
 A tear out of his eyes.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

Toiling,—rejoicing,—sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some task begin,
Each evening sees it close;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught !
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortune must be wrought ;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought !
The Village Blacksmith.

Not for long, however, might Longfellow remain undisturbed in his sunny room. Sometimes he welcomed the opening door that saw "a little figure stealing gently in, laying an arm round his neck as he bent over his work, and softly whispering some childish secret in his ear." For this was no obstacle to the current of his tranquil thoughts. "My little girls are flitting about my study," he wrote to a friend, "as blithe as two birds. They are preparing to celebrate the birthday of one of their dolls..."

Painting by Dudley Tennant. THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH.

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door :
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing floor.





A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

What a beautiful world this child's world is !
I take infinite delight in seeing it go on all
around me."

It was with absolute sincerity that he had
exclaimed :

Come to me, O ye children !
For I hear you at your play,
And the questions that perplexed me
Have vanished quite away.

Ye open the eastern windows,
That look towards the sun,
Where thoughts are singing swallows,
And the brooks of morning run.

In your hearts are the birds and the sunshine,
In your thoughts the brooklet's flow;
But in mine is the wind of Autumn,
And the first fall of the snow.

Ah ! what would the world be to us,
If the children were no more ?
We should dread the desert behind us
Worse than the dark before.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

What the leaves are to the forest,
With light and air for food,
Ere their sweet and tender juices
Have been hardened into wood,—

That to the world are children ;
Through them it feels the glow
Of a brighter and sunnier climate
Than reaches the trunks below.

Come to me, O ye children !
And whisper in my ear
What the birds and the winds are singing
In your sunny atmosphere.

For what are all our contrivings,
And the wisdom of our books,
When compared with your caresses,
And the gladness of your looks ?

Ye are better than all the ballads
That ever were sung or said;
For ye are living poems,
And all the rest are dead.

Children.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

But these were congenial moments. There were visitors much less desirable. "He was besieged," as one of his friends declares, "by every possible form of interruption which the ingenuity of the human brain could devise." For his admirers, whose name was legion, were not satisfied with hero-worship afar off: they must needs force themselves into his presence, and express their admiration *viva-voce*. Most amazing folks swooped suddenly down upon him, ruthless and unabashed.

Longfellow, always quick to see the comical side of a situation, would tell with great delight strange tales of his unexpected guests. "One man," he said, "a perfect stranger, came with an omnibus full of ladies. He introduced himself, then returning to the omnibus, took out all the ladies, one, two, three, four, five, with a little girl, and brought them in. I entertained them to the best of my ability, and they stayed an hour."

On another occasion, an English gentleman, with no letter of introduction, abruptly introduced himself, thus: "In other countries, you know, we go to see ruins, and the like--but you

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

have no ruins in your country, and I thought," growing embarrassed, "I would call and see you!" Another strange gentleman accosted him with great fervour, "Mr. Longfellow, I have long desired the honour of knowing you. I am one of *the few men* who have read your *Evangeline!*"

All these worshippers at his shrine were received by the Poet with his unfailing courtesy and patience; but he was invariably adroit in warding off compliments. To applause and flattery he was impervious—reference to his own works was distasteful to him. His perfect modesty was the reflex of his natural reticence.

Longfellow regarded life from the standpoint of eternity, and thus was one who, in the words of à Kempis, "careth little for the praise or dispraise of men." His gaze was riveted upon that "Land of the Hereafter," to which he was always more than ready to set out, and in the departure of Hiawatha he had imaged his longing for the "Happiest Land."

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

On the shore stood Hiawatha,
Turned and waved his hand at parting;
On the clear and luminous water
Launched his birch canoe for sailing,
From the pebbles of the margin
Shoved it forth into the water;
Whispered to it "Westward! westward!"
And with speed it darted forward.

And the evening sun descending
Set the clouds on fire with redness,
Burned the broad sky, like a prairie,
Left upon the level water
One long track and trail of splendour,
Down whose stream, as down a river,
Westward, westward Hiawatha
Sailed into the fiery sunset,
Sailed into the purple vapours,
Sailed into the dusk of evening.

And the people from the margin
Watched him floating, rising, sinking,
Till the birch canoe seemed lifted
High into that sea of splendour,
Till it sank into the vapours
Like the new moon slowly, slowly
Sinking in the purple distance.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

And they said " Farewell for ever !"
Said " Farewell, O Hiawatha !"
And the forests, dark and lonely,
Moved through all their depths of darkness,
Sighed, " Farewell, O Hiawatha !"
And the waves upon the margin
Rising, rippling on the pebbles,
Sobbed " Farewell, O Hiawatha !"
And the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,
From her haunts among the fenlands,
Screamed " Farewell, O Hiawatha ! "

Thus departed Hiawatha,
Hiawatha the Beloved,
In the glory of the sunset,
In the purple mists of evening,
To the regions of the home-wind,
Of the Northwest wind Keewaydin,
To the Islands of the Blessed,
To the kingdom of Ponemah,
To the land of the Hereafter !

Hiawatha.

Personal friends, of whom the Poet possessed many, would arrive in time for lunch, and be welcomed by the master of Craigie

Painting by J. Finnemore.

HIAWATHA.

And the evening sun descending
Left upon the level water
One long track and trail of splendour,
Down whose stream as down a river,
Westward, westward Hiawatha
Sailed into the fiery sunset,
Sailed into the purple vapours,
Sailed into the dusk of evening.







A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

House at the gate in the lilac hedge. He would bring them into the large, cheerful dining-room, and the children would sit at a little table on the verandah, while the host, with his own hands, set the copper kettle singing, and made tea in the antique silver pot.

It was a peaceful, happy hour for the guests. Longfellow, unlike Tennyson, was never much of a talker: he was a listener and observer, who dwelt in a speaking silence—in what has been defined as a heavenly unfathomableness. Ruskin had written: “You come as such a *calm* influence to me... you give me such a feeling of friendship and repose.” And this feeling was enhanced by the man’s natural dignity and grace, the refinement of his features, the perfect taste of his dress, and the exquisite simplicity of his manners. Many have alluded to his soft, musical voice, to his steady blue-gray eyes, to the “innate charm of tranquility,” which gave a peculiar spiritual sweetness to his smile. But the man was even more, and better than the poet; so much so that a young enthusiast exclaimed “All the vulgar and pretentious people in the world

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

ought to be sent to Mr. Longfellow to show them how to behave!" Nor was this calm the outcome of natural placidity—it had been attained through bitter suffering: it was that gleam of a hero's armour which the "red planet Mars" unveils to a tear-dimmed sight, when

The night is come, but not too soon ;
And sinking silently,
All silently, the little moon
Drops down behind the sky.

There is no light in earth or heaven,
But the cold light of stars ;
And the first watch of night is given
To the red planet Mars.

Is it the tender star of love ?
The star of love and dreams ?
O no ! from that blue tent above,
A hero's armour gleams.

And earnest thoughts within me rise,
When I behold afar,
Suspended in the evening skies,
The shield of that red star.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

O star of strength ! I see thee stand
And smile upon my pain ;
Thou beckonest with thy mailed hand,
And I am strong again.

Within my breast there is no light,
But the cold light of stars ;
I give the first watch of the night
To the red planet Mars.

The star of the unconquered will,
He rises in my breast,
Serene, and resolute, and still,
And calm and self-possessed.

And thou, too, whosoe'er thou art,
That readest this brief psalm,
As one by one thy hopes depart,
Be resolute and calm.

O fear not in a world like this,
And thou shalt know ere long,
Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer and be strong.

The Light of Stars.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

After lunch, the guests would be taken round the house, and its various treasures pointed out: books in every corner, and on every wall pictures and portraits; antique furniture, interesting mementoes of every sort. It was a home well worth seeing: and an old-world air pervaded all, from the quaint drawing-room, with its old-fashioned, rose-festooned wall-paper, to the upper rooms with the Dutch-tiled hearths.

Later on, to those with whom he felt specially *en rapport*, Longfellow would read aloud some poems, new or old, his own, or those of other men. He was not a forcible or a dramatic reader; the simplicity which he loved "in all things," as he had said, "but specially in poetry," was evident also here. Yet perhaps no other man could have done equal justice to the lingering hexameters of his most successful poem—for such, by reason of its novelty, pathos, and beauty, *Evangeline* must always be considered. "It has become a purifying portion," says Rossetti, "of the experiences of the heart... a long-drawn sweetness and sadness"; and, though sixty years have elapsed

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

since *Evangeline* first appeared, the ideal maiden of this "idyll of the heart" has lost no fraction of her loveliness.

Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen summers.

Black were her eyes as the berry that grows
on the thorn by the wayside,
Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath
the brown shade of her tresses!

Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine
that feed in the meadows.

When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers at noon-tide

Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah! fair as sooth
was the maiden.

Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn, while
the bell from its turret

Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest with his hyssop

Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters blessings upon them,

Down the long street she passed, with her chaplet of beads and her missal,

Wearing her Norman cap, and her kirtle of blue, and the ear-rings,

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW.

Brought in the olden time from France, and
since, as an heir-loom,
Handed down from mother to child, through
long generations.
But a celestial brightness—a more ethereal
beauty—
Shone on her face and encircled her form,
when, after confession,
Homeward serenely she walked with God's
benediction upon her.
When she had passed, it seemed like the ceas-
ing of exquisite music.

Evangeline.

In the course of the afternoon, some of the poet's guests taking leave, others would accompany him to a concert, organ recital, or any other musical function which might be available. Longfellow was passionately fond of good music, and lost no opportunity of hearing it. His own lyrics are singularly susceptible, as all composers know, of an adequate musical setting.

Few short poems in the world have been so often sung as "Stars of the summer night"—"Good-night, beloved"—"The rainy day"—

Painting by H. M. Brock.

EVANGELINE.

But a celestial brightness—a more ethereal beauty—
Shone on her face and encircled her form, when
 after confession,
Homeward serenely she walked with God's benedic-
 tion upon her.
When she had passed it seemed like the ceasing of
 exquisite music.





H.M.BROCK.



A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

and other well-known verses. A most effective sense of sound and rhythm, joined with perfect simplicity of diction, evince the inherent artistry of a man who was no musician in the technical sense, but who could express himself in such lines as

The night is calm and cloudless,
And still as still can be,
And the stars come forth to listen
To the music of the sea.
They gather, and gather, and gather,
Until they crowd the sky,
And listen in breathless silence,
To the solemn litany.
It begins in rocky caverns,
As a voice that chants alone
To the pedals of the organ
In monotonous undertone;
And anon from shelving beaches
And shallow sands beyond,
In snow-white robes uprising
The ghostly choirs respond.
And sadly and unceasing
The mournful voice sings on,

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

And the snow-white choirs still answer
Christe eleison !

The Golden Legend.

After dinner, to which perhaps an intimate friend or two remained, the poet would remain awhile in his study: not actually at work, for his writing was only done in the morning hours, but considering and criticising work already accomplished, and carefully perusing that great translation of Dante which he considered, rightly or wrongly, as the most important work of his life. The twilight would slowly fade into the dusk of a "blindman's holiday," and then came the sweetest moment of the day.

Longfellow's intense affection for all little ones, his touching kindness to them, his sympathy with their most trivial joys or troubles, were focussed and centred in the love he bore to his own dear, motherless children.

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

I hear in the chamber above me
 The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
 And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
 Descending the broad hall-stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
 And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:
 Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are plotting and planning together
 To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
 A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded
 They enter my castle wall !

They climb up into my turret
 O'er the arms and back of my chair;
If I try to escape they surround me;
 They seem to be everywhere.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine !

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old moustache as I am
Is not a match for you all !

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down in the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there I will keep you for ever,
Yes, for ever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away !

The Children's Hour.

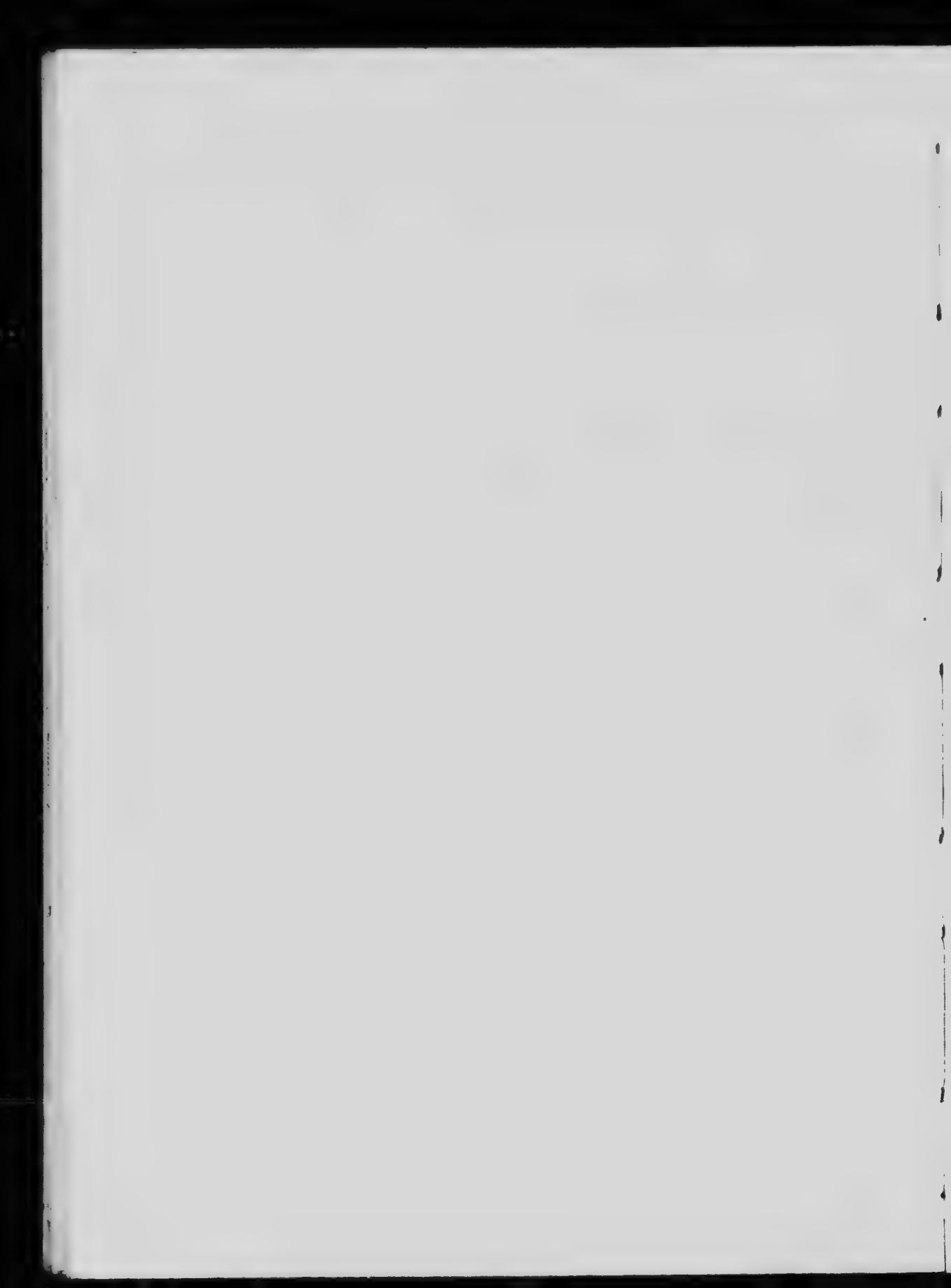
Painting by A. E. Jackson.

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR.

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When the night is beginning to lower,
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That is known as the Children's Hour.

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O'er the arms and back of my chair ;
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A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

A brief period of childish gaiety would supervene, to which the man of childlike heart responded readily; and when the little feet had pattered bedward, and the house was silent from the merry little voices, the father would sit on until midnight in his spacious empty room. He would occupy himself with letters—long, fragrant, pleasant gossips to his best and most familiar friends at a distance: till midnight came upon him unawares. “It is nearly one o’clock—I am the only person up in the house: my candle is sinking in its socket.”

And a double loneliness descended upon him as his weary hand laid down the pen. He remained inert and brooding; the solitude was almost tangible. But this solitude was presently peopled by visions, fraught with ineffable consolation to a mind never out of touch with “other-worldly” influences.

When the hours of Day are numbered,
And the voices of the Night
Wake the better soul, that slumbered,
To a holy, calm delight;

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

Ere the evening lamps are lighted,
And, like phantoms grim and tall,
Shadows from the fitful firelight
Dance upon the parlour wall ;

Then the forms of the departed
Enter at the open door ;
The beloved, the true-hearted,
Come to visit me once more ;

He, the young and strong, who cherished
Noble longings for the strife,
By the roadside fell and perished,
Weary with the march of life !

They the holy ones and weakly,
Who the cross of suffering bore,
Folded their pale hands so meekly,
Spake with us on earth no more !

And with them the Being Beauteous,
Who unto my youth was given,
More than all things else to love me,
And is now a saint in heaven.

With a slow and noiseless footstep
Comes that messenger divine,
Takes the vacant chair beside me,
Lays her gentle hand in mine.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

And she sits and gazes at me
With those deep and tender eyes,
Like the stars, so still and saint-like,
Looking downward from the skies.

Uttered not, yet comprehended,
Is the spirit's voiceless prayer,
Soft rebukes, in blessings ended,
Breathing from her lips of air.

O, though oft depressed and lonely,
All my fears are laid aside,
If I but remember only
Such as these have lived and died!

Footsteps of Angels.

"Empty is a horrid word," the Poet had written to a friend—but the room is no longer empty. It has become a habitation for other visitants than the motley throng of flatterers impelled by curiosity, who hindered his morning hours. Unspoken benedictions lie thick upon the air—the man's griefs are soothed away by the touch of invisible fingers. Patient, unselfish, indomitable, he resumes the burden of his daily life with new hope and courage for the morrow.

A DAY WITH LONGFELLOW

As torrents in summer,
Half dried in their channels,
Suddenly rise, though the
Sky is still cloudless,
For rain has been falling
Far off at their fountains ;

So hearts that are fainting
Grow full to o'erflowing,
And they that behold it
Marvel, and know not
That God at their fountains
Far off has been raining.

Tales of a Wayside Inn.



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